

MARVEL

13

LGY#739

DONNY CATES

NIC KLEIN

MATT WILSON

prey
PART 5

THOR

THOR

THOR IS THE GOD OF THUNDER AND THE ALL-FATHER OF ASGARD.

SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS TO RECENT TROUBLES, THOR ATTEMPTED TO TRADE PLACES WITH HIS OLD ALTER EGO, DONALD BLAKE. BUT BLAKE HAS GONE INSANE AND NOW SEEKS REVENGE ON ODIN AND ALL THOSE TOUCHED BY ODIN'S POWER. HE TRAPPED THOR IN A HIDDEN DIMENSION BENEATH THE ROOTS OF THE WORLD TREE—AND SENT THE REST OF ASGARD'S FORCES TO DIMENSION BLOOD!

THROG, THE FROG OF THUNDER, AND THE TELEPORTING DOG LOCKJAW TOOK A STAND AGAINST BLAKE ONLY TO LAND DEFEATED AT THE FEET OF THE NEW VALKYRIE—JANE FOSTER!

BLAKE BROKE INTO DOCTOR STRANGE'S SANCTUM SANCTORUM AND LEARNED THE SOURCE OF ODIN'S POWER—THE WORLD TREE ITSELF!

WITH THE BLOOD OF THE WORLD TREE NOW SPILLED AND THOR STILL TRAPPED, VALKYRIE TRACKS DOWN THE LAST PERSON AVAILABLE TO HELP: ODIN HIMSELF! BUT SHE FINDS HIM DROWNING HIS SORROWS AT AN INTERGALACTIC BAR—HOW HAS THE MIGHTY ODIN FALLEN SO LOW?

“prey” PART FIVE OF SIX

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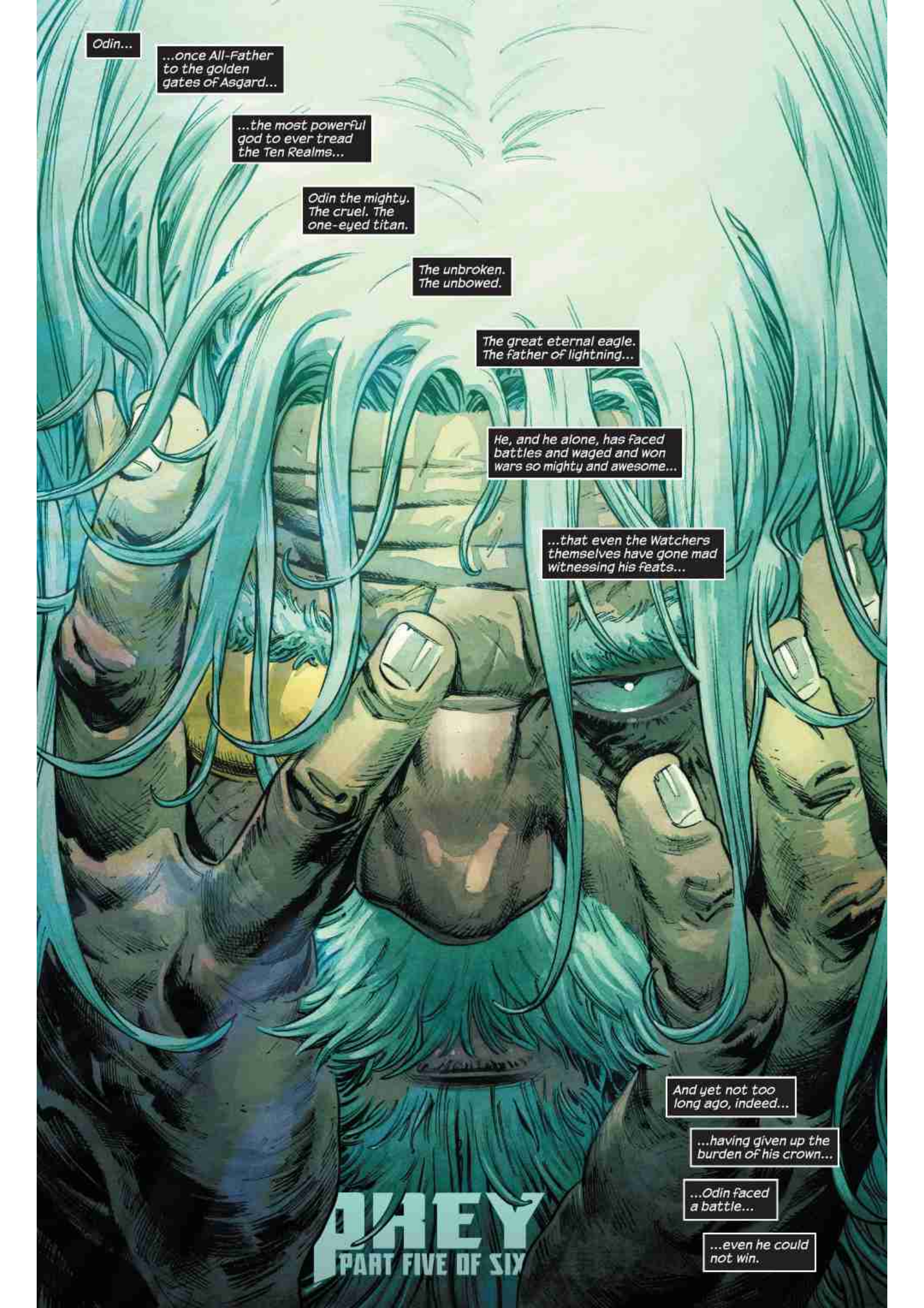
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Odin...

...once All-Father
to the golden
gates of Asgard...

...the most powerful
god to ever tread
the Ten Realms...

Odin the mighty.
The cruel. The
one-eyed titan.

The unbroken.
The unbowed.

The great eternal eagle.
The father of lightning...

He, and he alone, has faced
battles and waged and won
wars so mighty and awesome...

...that even the Watchers
themselves have gone mad
witnessing his feats...

And yet not too
long ago, indeed...

...having given up the
burden of his crown...

...Odin faced
a battle...

...even he could
not win.

AHEY
PART FIVE OF SIX

Odin and his wife and queen, Freyja, set out among the kingdoms that lay beyond realms imaginable to find and rekindle the fire that once burned in their hearts...



But...alas...

...the flame...

...for as long and as far as they both journeyed...



...was lost.



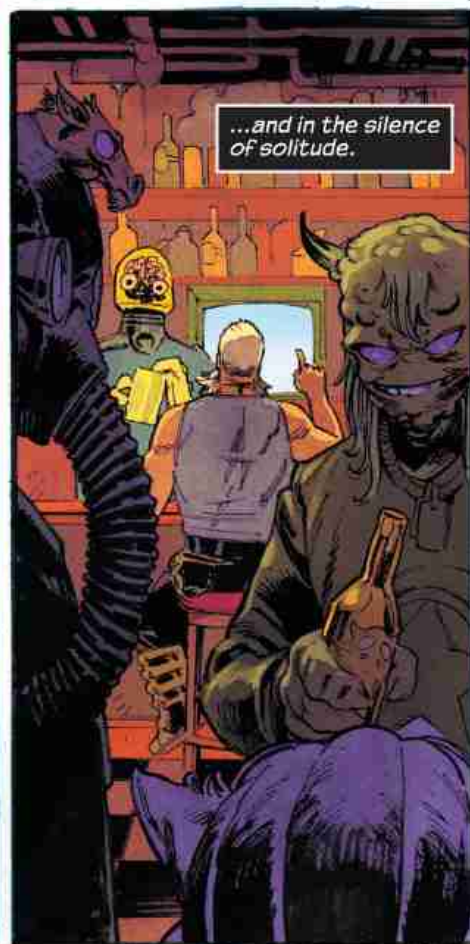
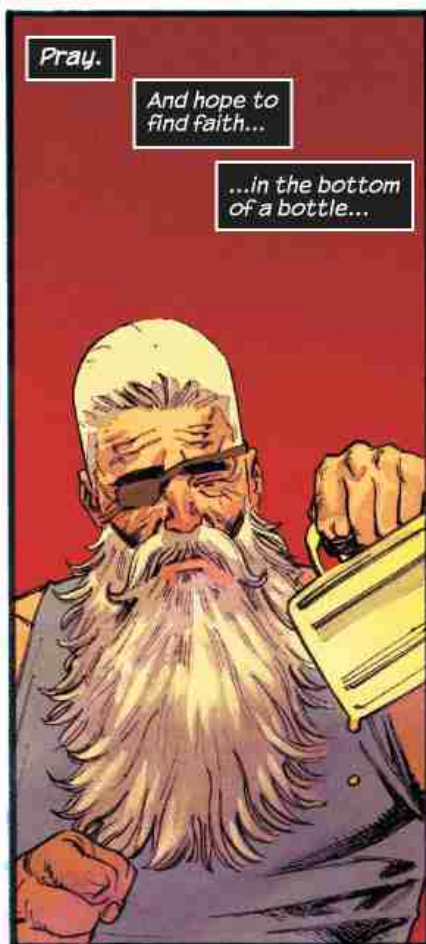
Buried...

...in the stone heart of a stubborn old god...



It is the greatest sorrow then...that by the time he found it once again...





NOW...

That is, of course, until...



UGH...
WHAT...WHAT
IS IT THAT
YOU--

GET
UP, OLD
MAN!!!

YOU STARTED THIS
FIGHT--NOW STAND
UP AND FINISH
IT!

I CAME TO YOU FOR
HELP. HELP IN A
MESS OF YOUR
OWN MAKING, AND
YOU LASHED OUT
LIKE A DRUNKEN
SCHOOL BOY. NOW,
AGAIN, STAND
UP AND...

WAIT...

WHY...

WHY
ARE YOU SO
WEAK?

HEH...DON'T
COUGH DO NOT
MISTAKE MERCY
FOR WEAKNESS,
VALKYRIE...OR...

...WHATEVER
THE DAMNED HEL
YOU ARE CALLING
YOURSELF THESE
DAYS...





BUT...

...IF IT WILL
MAKE YOU HAPPY
TO GLOAT...

NO. NO, I
AM NOT THE GOD
I ONCE WAS. I GAVE
THOSE POWERS TO
MY SON. I HAVE...
GIVEN...

...I HAVE
LOST...

...SO VERY
MUCH SINCE
YOU AND I LAST
SPOKE...

I...I DO
NOT KNOW
WHAT TO--

IT'S THOR.
HE'S--

I DO NOT
WANT OR NEED
YOUR PITY. I NEED
YOU TO LEAVE. THERE
IS NOTHING I
CAN DO--



OF COURSE,
IT IS. THE BOY
CAN TAKE CARE
OF HIMSELF.
NOW--



DONALD BLAKE IS FREE.
HE KNOWS WHAT HE IS.
WHY YOU MADE HIM.
HE'S GONE MAD.

HE HAS SLAIN
THE MIDGARD
SERPENT. STOLEN
ITS POWER.

IMPRISONED YOUR
SON IN THE PRISON YOU
MADE FOR BLAKE. BANISHED ALL
OF ASGARD TO SOME SORT OF HELL
DIMENSION. AND NOW HE IS FREE.

AND AS
WE SPEAK, HE
IS RIPPING THE WORLD
TREE APART WITH HIS HANDS
TO GAIN THE ALL-POWER.



SO NO,
THOR VERY MUCH
CANNOT TAKE CARE
OF HIMSELF. SO
GET SOBER
AND--

I'LL
GET MY
ARMOR.

THAT'LL
DO.

CHOOM



WE'LL
NEED MORE
ARMOR.

THESE WEAPONS
ARE FINE TOOLS.
NO REPLACEMENT FOR
STORMBREAKER, MIND
YOU, BUT YOU AND YOUR
PEOPLE SHOULD
BE PROUD.

BILL...

THE DWARVES
OF NIDAVELLIR
COULD LEARN
FROM YOUR
WARSMITHS.

BLEET!

BILL!

WHAT ARE WE DOING?
THIS IS ABSURD.

UNTIL WE CAN
FIND OUR WAY OUT FROM
THIS PLACE, WE ARE MERELY
PLAYING DRESS-UP IN
CHILDREN'S
CLOTHES--

WE ARE
DOING ALL
THAT WE CAN
UNTIL WE CAN
DO MORE.

WHAT
DOES THAT
MEAN?

YOU ARE A
GOD, LADY SIF.
YOU SHOULD
KNOW...

IT
MEANS HAVING
FAITH...

...HEAVENS...

"...AND BELIEVING
IN MIRACLES."

SORRY
WE'RE LATE.

IT'S BEEN...
QUITE SOME
TIME SINCE I
HAVE BEEN IN
THIS REALM.

STRANGE!!!

LOCKJAW!

IT'S GOOD
TO SEE YOU, SIF.
NOW, HOW CAN
WE HELP?

WE HAVE
TO GET BACK
TO ASGARD!
NOW!

YES...
YES, OF
COURSE.

ALTHOUGH...
I MUST
ADMIT...

...I WAS
NOT EXPECTING
SO MANY OF
YOU...

ARE THOSE...
BEARS?



OH, STEPHEN...HOW I WILL RELISH THIS...



GO ON...

SAY IT.

SAY YOU NEED MY HELP...



HELLO...

...LOKI.

HEY! HEY, @##% YOU IN YOUR @##%, YOU @##%@#! YOU'RE LUCKY YA GOT ALL YOUR BOYS WITH YOU OR I'D OPEN YOU UP! YOU WATCH YOUR MOUTH BEFORE--



BATS! THAT'S ENOUGH.



NOW, STEPHEN. I KNOW YOU AND I HAVEN'T ALWAYS...SEEN EYE TO EYE ON THINGS, BUT...IN LIGHT OF CURRENT EVENTS, I WILL, FOR JUST THIS ONCE, BE THE BIGGER MAN...

YOU NEED MY HELP. I NEED YOURS.

FOR TODAY, WE SHARE A COMMON ENEMY.



SO LET'S OPEN THE GATES OF HEL, SHALL WE?

ASGARD.

RAGHH!!!

MORE!!! YES! YES! SHOW
ME! SPEAK TO ME,
DAMN Y--

AGH!!!

KRAK

OH...OH,
NO...

CAN IT
BE? CAN ONE
MAN BE THIS
LUCKY?

HAS THE
FROG PRINCE
HIMSELF TRULY
RETURNED FOR
MORE?

AYE...

INDEED, I HAVE
RETURNED...



LUCKY FOR YOU.

HEH...

OH, WE'VE
PLAYED THIS GAME
BEFORE, HAVEN'T WE?
YOU AND ALL YOUR
HEROES!

AM I
SUPPOSED TO BE
SCARED?

OH.



I WOULD
BE.

WELL,
IT'S ABOUT
TIME...

...FATHER.



I AM NOT
YOUR FATHER,
GHOST.

BUT IF
IT'S *PUNISHMENT*
YOU LOOK FOR...

...CONGRATULATIONS.
YOUR JOURNEY HAS
COME TO AN END.



YOU THINK
I'M AFRAID
OF YOU?!

PERHAPS
NOT. BUT
YOU...

YOU HAVE
NO IDEA WHAT
YOU HAVE JUST
UNLEASHED...

ALL OF THAT
POWER IN YOU.
ALL THAT BLOOD
FROM THE WORLD
TREE.

WHERE DO
YOU THINK IT'S
BLEEDING?



BELOW...

I AM THE
GOD OF THE
STORM.



I AM
THE KING OF
ASGARD.



CAN YOU
HEAR ME,
BLAKE?!



CAN YOU FEEL THE
THUNDER?!



YOU WANT
THE ODIN-
FORCE?

YOU MAY
NOT HAVE
IT.



BUT YOU
MAY HAVE
THE THOR-
FORCE.





YOU MAY
HAVE ALL
OF IT!

And indeed, the thunder
echoed across the infinite
canyons of the Ten Realms.

A beacon as bright
as the sun.

So that
Thor...

...could finally
be found.

TO ME, MY
RAVENS!



YES, MY
LORD, YOU
WOULD REQUIRE
A VESSEL.





I...I
AM NOT DONE.
YOU...YOU HAVE TO
ANSWER FOR
WHAT YOU HAVE
DONE...

YOU...
YOU OWE
ME!



AND I WILL NOT BE
STOPPED!!! NOT BY
ANYONE!!!

I WILL KILL A HUNDRED
MORE OF YOU UNTIL I
HAVE WHAT IS
RIGHTFULLY MINE!!!



YOU
OWE ME A
LIFE!!!



ALL LIFE
ENDS. I WILL GIVE YOU
NO MORE THAN
THAT.

DONALD BLAKE,
SHADOW OF
THUNDER, SLAYER
OF THE GREAT
SERPENT...IT IS
MY JUDGMENT
THAT YOU BE
UNMADE AND
YOUR NAME
STRICKEN
FROM THE--



FATHER. I BELIEVE
I'LL HANDLE
THIS.





COME
AND GET
IT.

TO BE CONCLUDED!

QUOTH THE RAVENS: THE HUGINN & MUNINN SHOW

WRITE TO US AT MHEROES@MARVEL.COM
AND MARK YOUR MISSIVES "OKAY TO PRINT."



Muninn, did the mortals in Midgard grow extra limbs since the last time I saw them? Just when I think we are through a pile of letters, another pile comes in! We are up to our beaks!

Well, Huginn, if you didn't use that beak of yours to complain so much, we might be further along! Seems I am the only one that ever does the work around here.

I shall pretend I didn't hear you say that!

Besides, these prayers from the mortal realm are all for All-Father Thor and Asgard. The love mortals have for the gods should be heard! Like this prayer here! Which I think ends on a wonderful idea.

Huginn & Muninn,

I must say, I have just finished THOR #11, and I'm speechless! It's crazy to think that after just eleven issues, Donny Cates' run is already being compared to the great J.M.S. and Simonson years. Not to mention the incredible art that jumps off the page. This is the first comic I read every day it comes out. It always keeps me guessing who will pop up next! Adam Warlock? Gladiator? Who knows? Keep up the good work!

P.S. Bandit (my dog) wants more Thor and says Huginn looks tasty!

Derrick & Bandit

Ah! A mortal with good taste! There are such few of them... I see why you picked this to read first, Muninn. Excellent choice--eh! I dare say...what is that at the end there? The mortal's dog wishes to eat me?! Why, I never! Such disrespect to a wonderful, important bird of the All-Father's! I'll have you know--

I wouldn't be opposed to it...a world where I, Muninn, am the sole raven of the All-Father. Things would go a lot smoother, I think. Mortal, I request a visit from thine mutt named Bandit this instant!

Muninn! How dare you agree with this preposterous idea! This is why you read this letter first, I see! The sting of betrayal runs deep! Furthermore, All-Father Thor would

not like to come back to just one raven! And not even the good raven, at that...

I cannot hear your squawking, Huginn--I am already reading the next mortal's prayer.

Issue #11? Frog Thor?

Really?

That one caught me off guard. In fact, I had missed the original appearance in THOR #363.

I had to use Wikipedia just to bring me up to speed!

Congrats to Donny Cates for mining the deep ore of the THOR canon.

Thanks to Klein and Wilson for following Cates off this ledge.

Keep on running.

Rabbi Steven Lebow

Rabbi Emeritus

Marietta, GA

Ah, yes, Donny was found multiple times digging through the Asgardian archives alongside another, Wil Moss! They did a grand job of making sure to include even the smallest, yet still just as powerful, Thors! Throg is not to be crossed either! Why, I remember a time when Huginn mistook him for just an ordinary frog...

Hmph! It's hard to distinguish him when he's without the hammer! An honest mistake when flying around! He did not need to threaten me! Bandit should maybe think about eating frogs rather than birds.

Would you focus, Huginn? 'Tis but a joke...maybe. Thank you, kind mortal, for writing in! Donny, Nic and Matt have worked tirelessly day and night to give the Ten Realms the best chronicles of our All-Father! We shall pass along these words, for they shall keep Donny, Nic and Matt working hard!

Huginn & Muninn,

The current run of Donny Cates' THOR has been fantastic! I just finished Part 3 of "Prey," and the book has me on the edge of my seat, wanting more. I mean, Throg and Lockjaw--who saw that coming?! (Interrobang intended.) I cannot wait to see what Parts 4-6 have in store

for us.

Thanks to Mr. Cates and all of the artists on this series. Huginn and Muninn, you also are doing a wonderful job keeping up with the letters from Midgard.

Corey Grant

Roanoke, VA (Midgard)

You are most welcome, Corey of Roanoke! We birds work tirelessly to make sure all of Midgard is heard while the All-Father and most of Asgard is gone! I'm glad someone is finally noticing...even if it's just a mere mortal.

Pfft! Huginn, don't be rude! True, mortals are not capable of much, but they and Midgard are important to the All-Father! Plus our wonderful storytellers, Donny and Nic, come from there! They are worthy of praise from time to time! Keep on reading, mortal! Donald is not yet done with his treacherous deeds!

Aye, aye! Donny, Nic and the others should be showered with praise, of course! 'Tis nice to also be praised though. Why, I see you puffing up your feathers with delight, Muninn. You cannot deny!

What? Preposterous. I did not so much as move a feather. Though...I will not deny, I stand as a taller bird today.

Haha! See, Muninn, even you are capable of being a fun bird from time to time.

Quiet, Huginn! It was a moment of weakness, 'tis all. I was simply lost in the praise. Back to the matters at hand! Thank you again, mortal!

Huginn & Muninn,

Hail ye, the Eyes and Ears of the cunning All-Father!

This new reinterpretation of Sir Donald Blake is truly delicious, almost as much as the alcoholic mixtures from Valhalla's wooden tables... But enough of my tricky Norse words!

I recently finished the eleventh book of tales about the dark reign of the thunder king, and I am delighted! It is one of the best-written and -illustrated tales I have seen so far.

I can't wait for the next parts of this thrilling story of Odin's sins of the past... And that brings us to a question I wanted to ask you:

Where's this old Odin, "the Fool"?

I ask out of complete curiosity—one doctor/friend asked me to, named Dona... DAVID! His name is David—you can be sure of that, faithful ravens.

Stay well!

You are doing great work!
From far lands,
Bart

P.S. Aren't you afraid that the "Slayer of Thunders" will come for you too?

Ah, Bart of Midgard, you speak like a true Asgardian! Are you sure you are not part Asgardian? I hear mortals do these ancestral tests all the time. Why you all don't keep records of your families' lineages to begin with is astounding. I could tell you every bird in my murder for the last millennium!

Haha! True indeed, Muninn! As for Odin...well, I hope by now your curiosity has been sated. 'Tis a good thing the great Valkyrie, Jane Foster, was able to quickly track him down! Though I'm sure us birds could have easily done the job just as well...

Aye, mortal, we are very nervous to be caught by the dreadful Donald Blake! Sometimes I hear his footsteps near, and we must quickly fly. Luckily, we are fast birds. Though I do think he might catch us soon, when our guard is down!

Pfft! He should think twice! We are the heralds of the All-Father! Though I must say...I am glad he didn't do what he did to the World Tree to us... Makes me nervous just thinking about it!

Aye! And be wary of that friend of yours, Bart of Midgard. For I see deceit in that name of his... David, as you say.

Dear Huginn and Muninn,

Donny Cates continues to impress with his creepy, foreboding characterization of the newly villainous Donald Blake. Blake's "date" with Jane Foster was an unsettling affair, made all the more tense by Nic Klein's ability to convey a thousand emotions with a single smirk or raise of an eyebrow.

Blake's behavior is reminiscent of early Venom stories, where Eddie Brock found his identity simultaneously shattered and defined by his greatest enemy--and sought to torment Peter Parker with sinister threats to his loved ones in revenge. At the rate we're headed, Blake could well take an equally high place among Thor's rogues' gallery as Venom eventually reached in the world of Spider-Man.

But Blake needs a new name to match his emerging persona. Could it be Prey, the title of our story? I'm rooting for yes--the irony of a predatory villain adopting such a contradictory title is almost too delicious to resist.

"Gregarious" Grant Hutchinson
Pensacola, FL

Aye, we were most worried for our dear Jane Foster! Makes me shudder to think what could have happened. Who knows what craziness goes on in the mind of a madman like Donald? I am just glad he hasn't set his eyes on us just yet. Right, Huginn?

Could not agree more, Muninn! I have lost a few feathers from all this worry! I am in need of a nice bath in the Asgardian springs after this. Perhaps a vacation as well to Alfheim--those Light Elves know how to treat a bird.

Huginn...focus. Though...I must agree. Anyway, mortal, do not give such titles away easily! For Donald is a madman and undeserving of any new names bestowed upon him! The only ones fitting of this man are villain, heathen, DISGRACE TO ASGARD! I am getting all worked up--my feathers are all ruffled now.

Calm thyself, Muninn. The All-Father will put an end to this, and soon enough, nobody shall remember the name Donald Blake.

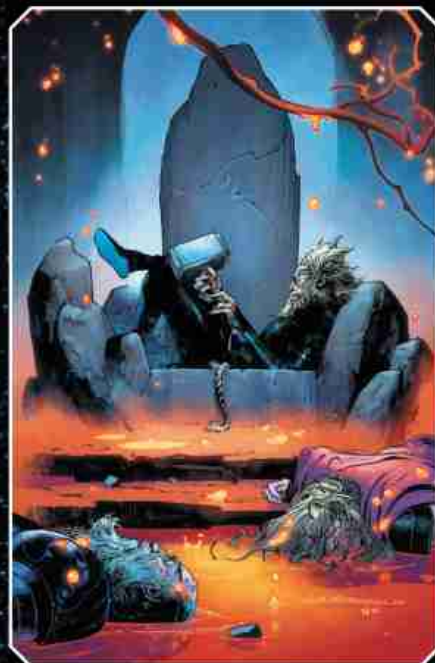
Well, another batch of prayers has come and gone! Thank you, mortals--we shall pass these along accordingly!

Hmph. I still am unsettled about that mortal's mutt wanting to eat me! No more letters of those kind! Only the ones that talk about how shiny my feathers are and, of course, any praise to the All-Father.

Do not fear, mortals, write to your

heart's content! And hark, if you love the stories of Thor, then you shall be pleased to read the stories of our own Beta Ray Bill in a new five-part epic brought to you by writer and artist Daniel Warren Johnson! I am most excited to read of his tales! Until next time, Midgard!

NEXT ISSUE:



BETA RAY BILL #1



